Two Studies Give a Lift to Running Barefoot

Researchers say the design of most running shoes may increase the risk of injuries. But runners have to be careful if they want to give up shoes. *Transcript of radio broadcast:*

02 February 2010

This is the VOA Special English Health Report.

Two new studies suggest that modern running shoes could increase the risk of injuries to runners.

One study involved sixty-eight healthy young women and men who ran at least twenty-four kilometers a week. The runners were observed on a treadmill machine. Sometimes they wore running shoes. Other times they ran barefoot.

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AP Photo

Rick Roeber has run barefoot since 2003

Researchers from the JKM Technologies company in Virginia, the University of Virginia and the University of Colorado did the study.

They found that running shoes create more stress that could damage knees, hips and ankle joints than running barefoot. They observed that the effect was even greater than the effect reported earlier for walking in high heels.

高跟鞋

The study appeared in the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Physical Medicine.

The other study appeared in the journal Nature. It compared runners in the United States and Kenya. The researchers were from Harvard University in Massachusetts, Moi University in Kenya and the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

They divided the runners into three groups. One group had always run shoeless. Another group had always run with shoes. And the third group had changed to shoeless running.

Runners who wear shoes usually come down heel first. That puts great force on the back of the foot. But the study found that barefoot runners generally land on the front or middle of their foot. That way they ease into their landing and avoid striking their heel.

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Harvard's Daniel Lieberman led the study. He says the way most running shoes are designed may explain why those who wear them land on their heels. The heel of the shoe is bigger and heavier than other parts of the shoe, so it would seem more likely to come down first. Also, the heel generally has thick material under it to soften landings.

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But the researchers do not suggest that runners immediately start running barefoot. They say it takes some training. And there can be risks, like running when your feet are too cold to feel if you get injured.

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The study was partly supported by Vibram, which makes a kind of footwear that it says is like running barefoot. The findings have gotten a lot of attention. But the researchers say there are many problems in the way the press has reported on their paper. So they have tried to explain their findings on a Harvard Web site. For a link, go to voaspecialenglish.com.

And that's the VOA Special English Health Report, written by Caty Weaver. I'm Steve Ember.

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（即便像上次 verycd 被停了也不会受影响）

如果 google group 被封锁了，可以想办法翻墙，也可以给 chinese-learn-english@googlegroups.com 发个信，系统可以手工加你的 email。